

PEOPLE and THINGS: By ATTICUS

I AM interested to read that Stepan, the young son of Mr. Mikoyan, is among those who will be accompanying Messrs. Khrushchev and Bulganin—and Khrushchev's son—on their British tour.

Extraordinary though it may sound, there is a "Jet-set" in Moscow whose leaders are the children of Messrs. Mikoyan and Kaganovitch. First and Second Deputy Chairmen of the Council of Ministers—young Kaganovitch married Stalin's only daughter, who is now said to be under house arrest.

This set is more or less the equivalent of what has been impudently described as the "Wallace Collection" in



MRS. KAGANOVITCH

London—a group of high-spirited and attractive scions of the Communist aristocracy. These say young people speak perfect English and French, dress in the latest Western styles and avidly follow the latest fashion magazines.

They are highly cultured and well up in the current period artistic and literary fashions of the West and when a friend of mine made fleeting contact with them last year their favourite reading was George Orwell's "1984."

Personally I find it of great significance that a representative of this exotic and surprising section of Moscow society should be accompanying the official visit and I hope someone at the Foreign Office will have the sense to take this young but important visitor under his wing. Khrushchev's son might be worth looking after as well.

Flouting Father

MR. Solomon West Ridgway Sayar Bandaranaike, the new Prime Minister of Ceylon, owes his weighty string of names to his father, a formidable ultra-conservative landowner, who nursed a deep affection for this country. Unfortunately, as far as his son was concerned, Mr. Bandaranaike, Senior, was over-lavish with his praise of Great Britain; and the Prime Minister's early leanings towards radicalism and nationalism can be put down as

a revolt against paternal dominance.

Certainly young Bandaranaike was happy, popular, and successful at Oxford where he had a more active political career—he was Secretary of the Union—than his father Anthony Eden, who was an undergraduate at much the same time. On his return to Ceylon, however, he felt that he was slighted by the British planter community.

He is agreeable, clever, sophisticated, well read—"How could I be hostile to a country that produced Mark Twain?" he replied when asked about his policy towards the United States—but his friendly critics say that he is apt to rely too much on his undoubted skill as an orator.

The Little Man

SCOTLAND Yard's impressions of the grisly Serov were: "Friendly little chap, pink cheeks, blue eyes and only just over five feet tall. Wonderfully inconspicuous. Completely disappears in a crowd. No fuss about security arrangements for the big visit, just asked how many men we wanted him to send and when we said none that was the end of the matter."

So my informant was all the more surprised when he saw General Serov and the Soviet Ambassador or Mr. Malik, together. The diminutive man spoke curiously and with absolute authority. The tone of the Ambassador's replies was that of a valet to his master.

Sounds That Give Delight

THIS evening's concert at the V. & A. is, I believe, Mr. Peter Pears' first solo appearance in London since his return from the Far East, where he and Mr. Benjamin Britten gave concerts in India, Indonesia, Japan, Bali and elsewhere.

These two connoisseurs of exquisite sound took an intense delight, Mr. Pears tells me, in the songs, the lutes, and the magical speech-song of the East. Mr. Britten is thinking, in fact, of basing his next opera on a story taken from a Japanese No-play, and I shall not be surprised if, in the new full-length ballet which he is preparing with Mr. John Cranko, the creator of "Cranky," there will be echoes of his great liking for the intonations of the Balinese orchestra.

Harmonious Changeover

THE choice of General Norstad as new Supreme Commander of S.H.A.P.E. is in step with a new awareness of the Air Age. Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery in particular has always held that as the air is now the senior partner in military affairs the

next Supreme Commander should be an airman.

When I spoke to the Field-Marshal about this new appointment he was enthusiastic. He has always had a very high opinion of General Norstad both as an airman and as a fighting commander. They have always worked in complete harmony. He added that he was delighted by the fact that he was asked to stay as Deputy Commander, and he had gladly agreed, for as long as he was wanted.

General Gruenther's retirement is on purely personal grounds. His health is fully restored, but he genuinely feels that after some five years as Chief of Staff and Supreme Commander, he has been there long enough, and should make way for younger men. Recently he has had many attractive offers of employment in civil life, and feels that at fifty-seven he must make the decision before he is too old.

He has certainly earned his rest. An administrator of genius, when work was pressing he would often take a dictaphone to his home at night. One morning recently his secretaries were surprised to hear Mrs. Gruenther's voice on the record. "For heaven's sake, Al, it's after two o'clock."

What Sells Books?

I HAVE often wondered, as myself an occasional book reviewer, as well as author, to what extent reviews in newspapers sell books. So I decided to find out from an example, choosing a book in which, I hasten to say, I have no personal interest, and one of modest scope and price, by an unknown author—or authors, rather.

It was "Home Baked" a book about bread-making, by George and Cecilia Scurfield, published by Faber & Faber. Mrs. Elizabeth David reviewed it in a 600-word article in *The Sunday Times* of March 25. Publication day had been the previous Friday, and up to and including the Sunday no other paper gave it, as far as I can trace, noticeable attention. This is what the publishers report:

We had actively subscribed the book so that the booksellers knew of it, and those that ordered it should have had adequate stocks to carry them over, for a time at any rate. Nevertheless, during the four-day week before Easter we sold 400 additional copies.

Orders and repeats came from all over the country. . . . In addition, which is unusual, quite a few private people inquired at our offices about the book, several of them carrying the review from *The Sunday Times* in their hands.

The conclusion I come to is

that, all in all, one review has been instrumental in selling quite a thousand copies of Mr. and Mrs. Scurfield's book.

Notes by Nasser

PASSENGERS who have an hour or two to spare on their airport are now being provided

with a 159-page booklet called "The Egyptian Revolution in Three Years." In this splendid document, which has been given to me by an enlightened transient, "the subjects have been dealt with in a scientific manner, depending solely on nothing but figures and facts."

These are troubled times and so I turned to the lengthy military section. "All through the ages the Egyptian Army has always acquitted itself honourably on the battlefield and has accomplished many well-known heroic feats." To supply this army "the

Revolutionary Government . . . has decided upon the constructing of local ammunition factories. Raw materials had to be supplied locally . . . so the iron and steel factory at Helwan was founded. This plant is now supplying iron, copper, lead, aluminium, and other raw materials."

Factories for making parachutes have also been started, and "the paratroopers are being taught the techniques of these industries, so that they may be able to produce parachutes in the battlefield, should necessity arise."

A Case for Screens

LAST Thursday's theft from the Tate raises once again the old and, to my mind, rather misleading question of whether we should not follow the example of the Frick Collection, New York, where the Coit 45s often outnumber the visitors and even the quickest-moving student is never out of sight of an armed guard.

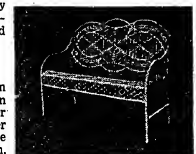
Certain classes of exhibit, of course, cannot be too closely watched—as was shown a few years ago, when a number of very valuable objects from the Duke of Wellington's collection were stolen with impunity from the V. & A. But pictures cannot be broken up and re-sold; in principle, to screw them to the wall than to recruit active men for work that is, by its very nature, tedious and unproductive.

Follow Me Leda

MR. EDWARD BAWDEN, the recently elected Academician, is one of the few contemporary designers for

industry who is unashamed of decoration. He has now added to his many designs for china, wallpapers, and textiles a cast-iron garden seat, which manages to be as gay and decorative as any Regency garden furniture, yet wholly of our own time. Perhaps its Regency quality is more apparent in my photograph than its modernity.

The seat, I gather, is now being made in limited quantities by a Midlands iron-founder. I hope that it will be the precursor of more decorative garden pieces. Second-hand seats, urns and railings have been prohibitively expensive



BAWDEN'S SEAT

during recent years, and the outdoor furniture in the Festival of Britain was altogether too stark. English gardens can absorb the curves and filigrees of these cast-iron extravaganzas. I even hear rumours that Sir Hugh Casson has sponsored a miniature prototype for a garden chair with a back shaped like the wings of an all-embracing swan.

Note to Norstad

GENERAL GRUENTHER kept his retirement a close secret. At Thursday night's dinner to him at "The Rag," an old friend said to him, "Al, that job of yours must be giving you ulcers."

"Not on your life," said General Gruenther cheerfully. "I give them to others."